

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims (with additions underlined and deletions struck through) will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

- 1-28. (Canceled).
29. (Currently amended) The stencil of claim 30, wherein opposing edges of the ~~central body~~ metallic sheet are of equal length.
30. (Previously presented) A stencil comprising a metallic sheet having one or more apertures formed through the thickness of the metallic sheet to define a pattern for printing solder on a substrate, the metallic sheet having four peripheral edges, and the metallic sheet defining more than two receiving apertures along each peripheral edge.
31. (Previously presented) The stencil of claim 30, wherein the four peripheral edges each include more than twenty receiving apertures.
32. (Previously presented) The stencil of claim 31, wherein the receiving apertures are in the form of elongated slots separated by elongated strips.
33. (Previously presented) The stencil of claim 32, wherein the elongated slots and the elongated strips are of substantially the same width.
34. (New) A stencil comprising a metallic sheet having one or more apertures formed through the thickness of the metallic sheet to define a pattern for printing solder on a substrate, the metallic sheet having four peripheral edges, and the metallic sheet defining more than two slots along each peripheral edge.

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35. (New) An apparatus for printing materials onto surface contacts on an electronic substrate, the apparatus comprising:

a stencil comprising a metallic sheet having one or more apertures formed through the thickness of the metallic sheet to define a pattern for printing solder on a substrate, the metallic sheet having four peripheral edges, and the metallic sheet defining more than two slots along each peripheral edge; and

a supporting and tensioning apparatus including a plurality of displaceable mounting elements that can engage the four peripheral edges of the stencil at a plurality of locations to hold the stencil in tension.